

safety were carefully made before night. Hassan, who has a horse, and large property in good clothes, wanted a revolver, but was wisely refused, on the ground that to arm undisciplined men indiscriminately would be to run a great risk of being ourselves shot in any confusion.

There were then four men with rifles,, five with revolvers, and Aslam Khan's brother and two *tufangchis* with guns.

About eight the Bakhtiari signal-call was several times repeated, and I wondered if it were foe or friend, till Aziz's answering signal rang out loud and clear, announcing that it was "friends of Isfandiyar Khan."

Shortly I heard, " the plot thickens," and the " friends " turned out to be another brother of Aslam Khan, with four *tufangchis* and a promise of eight more, who never arrived. According to these men reliable information had been received that Khaja Taimur, our friend of Kalahoma, was sending forty men to rob us on Aslam Khan's territory in order to get him into trouble.

This arrival increased the excitement among the men, who piled tamarisk and the gum tragacanth bush on the fires most recklessly, the wild, hooded *tufangchis* and their long guns being picturesque in the firelight. I am all but positively sure that the rumour was invented by Aslam Khan, in order to show his vigilant care of guests, and secure from their gratitude the much-coveted possession of an English rifle. Hadji came to my tent, telling me " not to be the least afraid, for they

would not  
harm a lady." The Agha has a resource for  
every  
emergency, the Sahib is cool and brave, and  
besides that,  
I strongly suspected the whole thing to be  
a ruse of  
Aslam Khan, whom I distrust thoroughly. At  
all events  
I was asleep very early, and was only  
disturbed twice by  
Aziz calling to know if my servants were  
watching, and  
was only awakened at five by the Sahib and  
the Agha  
going past my tent, giving orders that  
any stranger